



# SCOTT WALKER

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

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For Immediate Release

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## **Governor Scott Walker Reinforces Workforce Reform Agenda with New Council on Workforce Investment Members**

*New Council Strengthens Private Sector Balance to Recommend Strategies to Address Skills Gap*

**Madison** – Governor Scott Walker today met with the new Council on Workforce Investment to reinforce his comprehensive agenda to develop Wisconsin's workforce and advance solutions providing employers with skilled workers who are prepared to fill openings now and in the years to come.

"We are pursuing an aggressive agenda to help job creators expand and fill good, family-supporting jobs," Governor Walker said. "A skilled and well-trained workforce is key to helping employers expand and workers to follow their individual paths to prosperity and independence. We look forward to the ideas and guidance the Council provides in our ongoing efforts to connect job seekers with new opportunities, address the skills gap, and grow our economy."

The Council oversees coordination of workforce development activities under the federal Workforce Investment Act, which includes the annual allocation of federal workforce development funding. Other duties include the review of plans submitted by Wisconsin's 11 autonomous workforce investment boards and development of metrics to assess the effectiveness of workforce development activities in Wisconsin.

Mary Isbister, President of General Metalworks Corporation in Mequon, is the chair of the Council, and Mike Laszkiewicz, Vice President and General Manager of Power Controls at Rockwell Automation in Milwaukee, is the vice-chair. Both Isbister and Laszkiewicz serve on the Manufacturing Council, a federal entity that advises the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Commerce on issues related to manufacturing in the United States.

Governor Walker discussed his \$100 million investment proposal to develop the state's workforce, including the \$15 million in worker training grants that recently won the Legislature's near-unanimous bipartisan support as the Wisconsin Fast Forward initiative. Additional resources will support a cutting-edge labor market information system and a host of workforce development activities at various agencies and programs including DWD, the Wisconsin Technical College System, the Department of Health Services' FoodShare Employment and Training program, K – 12 education, the University of Wisconsin system, and Wisconsin's medical schools.

Governor Walker discussed additional strategies that helped private sector employers create over 62,000 jobs in 2011-12, including almost 20,000 manufacturing jobs. Wisconsin has been a national leader in

the growth of good-paying manufacturing jobs, a sector in which the average manufacturing worker is paid nearly \$10,000 more than the average annual wage for all Wisconsin workers.

Additional information on the Governor's Council on Workforce Investment can be found at <http://www.wi-cwi.org>.

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